

SSSC meeting

April 4, 2003

(Held in Room 315 of the Governor's Office Building)

Attending:

Keith Russell, Office of Administration  
Jackie Jackson, Conservation  
Lola Wekenborg, Conservation  
Steve Taylor, Corrections  
Sarah Schuette, Economic Development  
Bryan Howard, Elementary and Secondary Education  
Bill Carney, Health  
Thomas Ray, Health  
Bill Payton, Higher Education (Univ. of Mo.)  
JoAnne Flowers, Higher Education (Univ. of Mo.)  
Mark Doerner, Insurance  
Steve Dunn, Labor & Industrial Relations  
Darles Vernon, Labor& Industrial Relations (Div. Of Work Comp)  
Jim Lowery, Mental Health  
Chris Adler, Revenue  
John Giles, Social Services  
Sue Teeter, Social Services  
Jean Endsley, Transportation  
John Schumert, OCCU-TEC  
Skuli Gudmudsson OCCU-TEC  
Janice Steenburgen, Office of Administration

Jean Endsley presided over her first meeting as the new Chairperson of the State Safety Steering Committee. She began the meeting by having those in attendance introduce themselves. Then she took up consideration of the Minutes of the previous two meetings. Jean asked that the Minutes from the January 22, 2003 meeting be amended to reflect the fact that Steve Taylor was in attendance; Thomas Ray asked that they also note that he was in attendance that day, too. (These changes were subsequently made to the Minutes in question.)

The Committee then heard from Keith Russell about the training available from O.A. on how to deal with threatening phone calls. Keith's program provides free, 45-minute sessions suitable for 20 to 30 people. The program provides hands-on training in actually responding to a (mock) threatening call. This technique is theoretically more beneficial than merely providing employees with written materials because it's more realistic. The course also covers going through the steps on the bomb-threat card, what's most likely to

happen, (e.g., 90% are “threats” only), how calls are traced, etc. Gathering information to assist law enforcement in a subsequent investigation is one of the goals. Keith can also provide train-the-trainer instruction for those agencies that want it. Jean Endsley related a personal experience with a threatening call, and indicated that actually handling a call is different than reading about how to handle one. Also, Keith pointed out that, counter-intuitive as it might be, callers are frequently quite willing to stay on the phone and provide information that might later prove useful. Given the potential damage that could result from some threatening situations, Jean thought the concept of the training was an excellent idea.

The Committee next considered the issue of how state agencies can assure that their employees are properly licensed before allowing them to use state vehicles in an official capacity. Jean pointed out that within three years, a new federal policy on commercial drivers licenses will require private infractions to affect work-driver status. Janice indicated that O.A. has a policy under which the license status of the driver is reviewed when a vehicle is first “checked out” and then again, every six months. In developing a statewide policy, there are difficulties associated with deciding what actions to take at different incident levels (tickets, accidents, etc.) and whether there should be different treatment for those using state vehicles and those using their own vehicles for state business. In addition, if driving is “an essential function of the job,” there may be ADA implications to any policy. Bill Payton pointed out that the topic is important because statistics indicate that a person with two speeding tickets is in a “class” of people that is three times more likely to have an accident in the next year as someone with no tickets. A sub-committee was formed to look at the issue, made up of Chairperson Endsley, Chris Adler, Jim Lowery, Jackie Jackson and Lola Wekenborg (from Conservation) and Janice Steenburgen (as a resource), with Jim as subcommittee Chairman. They will investigate how significant a problem this is. They will also bring to the full Committee a copy of the pending federal CDL policy.

Next Jean passed out a draft of an Annual Report of the Committee she found in the files that was never actually submitted. She indicated a desire to be able to submit a report to the Governor’s Office or the Commissioner of O.A. in the near future. She asked that the Committee members review the draft and provide comments on what to include. Janice and Jean discussed the idea of providing an executive summary of the Committee’s Minutes, to provide an outline of what the SSSC has worked on; anyone wanting more information could be directed to that information (perhaps by posting it on the web-site). A sub-committee was formed to work on updates to the site, made up of John Schumert, Janice Steenburgen and Bryan Howard. They will look at posting the Minutes, sub-committee reports, etc. on the web page. They will also look at an annual report.

Then, John Schumert passed out the state’s latest injury statistics and discussed trends. The most frequent category of injury is “combative” situations, followed by “slips,” “material handling,” “assisting someone” and “doors.” This led to a discussion of accident investigations: Janice asked whether we were doing any investigations and whether our various safety committees were involved in the process. Steve Taylor discussed how they handle investigations at Corrections. There, a supervisor fills out an

accident report, which is then reviewed by a safety committee. The problem is that this does not happen in many other state agencies. Many times, the first the SSSC members hear about the injury is in a report from John Schumert. It was pointed out that 80% of injuries occur because of a failure to follow procedures. Skuli Gudmundsson advised us to “investigate the *problem*, not the *employee*”; changing the focus in this way has a real impact. A sub-committee on investigations made up of Janice and Sarah Schuette was formed to analyze the problem and report back to the committee.

Next, Jean passed out an advisory on the use of cell phones, which constitute another source of injuries. The National Safety Council recently determined that using “hands-free” cell phones in cars does not help reduce accidents. (Rather, the issue is one of the focus of the driver’s attention.) She also distributed a handout indicating that cell phones are a source of static electricity that can lead to accidents at filling stations. This led to a discussion of fires that have occurred in the past. Eventually, part of the fires-at-the-pump problem was traced to the fact that some drivers get back into their vehicles (especially in poor weather) to wait until the refilling is completed. Reentering the car and sitting down allows for a charge to build up, which can then be the source of a spark when the fuel nozzle is removed from the car. It was pointed out that portable gas cans can also build up a charge, especially if allowed to slide around in the bed of a pick up truck.

The Committee then moved on to a discussion of protecting the “physical plant” of certain state buildings. According to Janice, most of the state’s buildings are not “insured” through an insurance policy with an outside insurer. The exceptions are those buildings that were constructed with bond-issue funds and have a private insurance requirement as a condition of their financing. Now, the legislature is thinking of self-insuring these so-called “bonded” buildings too. Mark Kaiser apparently indicated to the Legislature that the SSSC is a source of protection for the state’s investment in this regard. Janice wondered whether there would be a need to begin doing inspections of these buildings to identify safety issues related to damage to these buildings. It was pointed out that the loss of one of these buildings or any of the state’s other structures would be a *major* problem under current budget circumstances. The members of the Committee were requested to consider their agency’s exposures in this regard and to report back on their agency’s exposures to fire, flood, earthquake, mold, etc. John agreed to find out what inspections are currently done on which buildings, and report back.

Next, Janice Steenburgen discussed the “contract” status of OCCU-TEC. The release of the Request for Proposals was delayed, hence OCCU-TEC will still be under contract until July 31. April 17 was the deadline for bids to be submitted under the RFP, which included the safety-training contract within its provisions.

Chairperson Endsley passed on the special charges for state-attendees at the annual safety conference. She then concluded the meeting by setting July 11<sup>th</sup> as the tentative date for the Committee’s next meeting. She indicated the meeting might include a presentation on West Nile Virus.